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Dr. Burton is as sane as he is enthusiastic. One feels like cheering him when he writes: "In all considerations of the theater, it would be a good thing to allow the unfortunate word 'elevate' to drop from the vocabulary. It misleads and antagonizes. It is better to say that the view presented in this book is one that wishes to make the play-house innocently pleasant, rational, and sound as art."

NATURE IN MUSIC. By LAWRENCE GILMAN. New York: John Lane Company, 1914.

The difficult art of conveying in words the distinctive effects of music, of giving reality to meanings that, though musically clear, are verbally vague, is practised by Mr. Gilman with unusual success. He possesses, truly, in a marked degree and in unusual balance, the two qualities which are essential to successful criticism of any art—a delicate susceptibility to artistic effect and a thoroughly logical mind. To these may be added a third, a quality more especially required in musical criticism because of the elusiveness of its subject-matter. This is the power of suggesting through poetic imagery and subtle analogies thoughts which defy exact definition. Mr. Gilman's criticism is imaginative enough to convey even to the relatively unmusical reader, to the reader whose perceptions are predominantly literary, a vivid and true impression of what various kinds of modern music really are and mean. By repeated intimations, by frequent deft changes of viewpoint, by apt literary allusions, he achieves an expression really clear and enlightening, but not easy to sum up or to reproduce in other words than his own.

Of the value of so-called "programme music," Mr. Gilman has no manner of doubt, and he finds no essential conflict between it and the "pure music" in which he also takes delight. The objection that music descriptive of nature is not self-contained—that it requires a commentary—he considers irrelevant. That a form of art is complex is no reason for rejecting it, especially when the form is one which offers the utmost scope to the imagination. Neither the opera, nor, indeed, the ordinary song is wholly self-contained, since "each is dependent upon an element external to itself—the song upon words in the mouth of the singer; the opera upon words sung, action represented, or, very often, upon so flagrantly external a thing as the display and movement of scenery." As Mr. Gilman proceeds, he wholly persuades us of the rightness of his point of view by showing us the spaciousness and the richness of the realm which would be closed to genius were the art of tonal landscape-painting to be abandoned.

Of the musical composers whom he calls the chief contemporary nature-painters—namely, Debussy, d'Indy, Loeffler, and MacDowell—Mr. Gilman writes with an enthusiasm that is obviously born of inti-

mate communion, and with a discrimination that renders their chief characteristics humanly and artistically intelligible. Debussy he calls "before all else a visionary and mystic, a dweller in the spiritual borderlands. . . . His usual emotional life is passed on the farther side of the boundaries of that field of consciousness which most men would call 'normal,' and he is for ever bringing back across the border rumors of the aspects and occupations of an unexplored country. . . . His nearest kin among the landscapists of the brush are such different spirits as Böcklin, Corot, and Whistler. . . . His nature-painting has no smack of the soil of the solid earth. . . ." And yet in exceptional cases Debussy is true, tangible, and familiar, as in his "Rondes de Printemps" (No. III. of his "Images" for orchestra)—a piece of music which Mr. Gilman believes has been grossly undervalued. The author's concretely vivid appreciation of this particular composition is enough to show that in his praise of the four famous modern composers he is not merely holding a brief for the mystics. In d'Indy, Mr. Gilman finds a spirit deeply devout. This composer's mysticism is like that of Wordsworth, "large and austere, rather than intimate and impassioned." Loeffler, on the other hand, feels "instinctive sympathy with the tragical in nature. His spiritual brethren are Poe, Maeterlinck, Baudelaire, Verlaine, in their darker and more disconsolate hours." MacDowell is chiefly distinguished by his Celtic quality—"the Celts' peculiar and instinctive sensibility toward the appeal of that which is remote, solitary, of strange beauty and import." Such, roughly indicated, are the distinctions which the author draws between the chief nature-poets of music; but it is impossible in abridged quotation not to spoil the effect of Mr. Gilman's complete and unified portrayals of emotions, moods, and temperaments.

The author discourses in this book upon a variety of topics not suggested by the title. In one of his essays he discusses the musical treatment of death, pointing out the curious and insufficiently noticed fact that composers have somehow always fallen short in dealing with this great theme. Mr. Gilman writes about "opera in English" with common sense and with sensitive earnestness. He points out the good and evil of Strauss with impartiality and acumen. Grieg he assigns to his true and distinctive place—a high one, though not the highest—with a logic that seems unanswerable. The final essay of the volume is an intimate appreciation of Loeffler—a keen but guarded exposition of the quality of a genius singularly "complex, various, and restless."

In practising a kind of criticism that tempts to rhapsody because without the rhapsodic mood appreciation of its subject-matter is hardly possible, Mr. Gilman keeps his head. It may be said of him, as Dowden said of Swinburne, that his admirations are penetrating, but it can never be said that his criticism is chaotic or lacking in propriety of emphasis.